



CAMPAIGN TO STOP KILLER ROBOTS

Statement by Campaign Coordinator Mary Wareham, Human Rights Watch
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We didn't expect a Campaign to Stop Killer Robots to be needed in the world – but it is.

Our lives are affected by the growing influence of computer processing and algorithmic thinking, which shapes our interactions in the world and the outcomes available to us.

These technological developments warn us to hold onto the fundamentals of humanity and to value each other not through calculation but through understanding.

From the Campaign's perspective, certain autonomous weapons systems are unacceptable per se and must be prohibited because they would fundamentally undermine human dignity, such as those that use sensors to automatically identify and apply force to people.

Weapons systems that cannot be meaningfully controlled must be prohibited if, for example, they are too complex for users to effectively understand what their effects will be.

Given the urgent need for regulation, it's disappointing that the next diplomatic meeting on lethal autonomous weapons systems has been postponed until 2021. This is due to restrictions put in place to slow the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots understands why the Convention on Conventional Weapons could not proceed as planned this month, but regrets the CCW could not adapt to fit the circumstances and hold the meeting virtually.

Highly militarised nations cannot be allowed to perpetuate hegemony through technology. We will not tolerate the unrestrained development of weapons systems enabled to use computer programming and sensors to identify and select targets, getting closer to machines making decisions over whom to kill.

We stand ready to work with states to secure a future that does not abide the targeting of people by machine but instead, values humanity and promotes the principle of human control over emerging technologies that affect all our lives.

States must develop coherent and comprehensive national policy on killer robots. They must cooperate to launch treaty negotiations in 2021. States should collaborate on the structure and key elements for an international treaty to retain meaningful human control over the use of force.